

The Tourism of Study Abroad

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

Lindsey Ahaus

Thesis Advisor:

Dr. Lauren Onkey

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

May 2005

Expected Date of Graduation: May 2006

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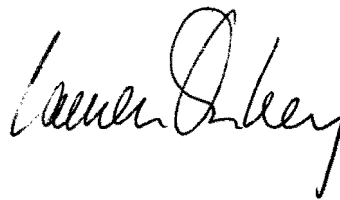
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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lauren Onkey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "L" and "O".

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Abstract:

Many study abroad students may feel that they are not tourists, and but in all reality they may very well be. Being a conscious tourist is a very important issue that is seldom, if ever, explained to students before they study abroad. Being a conscious tourist means you are aware of your surroundings and aware of the impact you have on the place you are visiting. In order to help study abroad students learn about this issue, I have created a website that explains conscious tourism and ways to practice it, alongside information about studying abroad and traveling on a budget. I focused on one city, Derry, Northern Ireland, to give an example of a place where conscious tourism is necessary, along with providing information about the city.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank Dr. Lauren Onkey for advising me on this project. Without her suggestions and critiques my project would not be what it is today. She consistently pushed me to think deeper and work harder.

I would also like to thank Kelly Wright and Jim Coffin for their aid on this project. They sent me abroad in the first place and got me interested in the study of Study Abroad,

and then provided me with information and help along my way.

I would also like to thank Stephen Jendraszak for teaching me how to design a website. Without him, my pictures wouldn't appear and my text would be all over the place!

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Virginia Ball Center classmates of "Consuming a Nation": Jonathan Branam, Beth Burress, Brian Gorrell, Kevin Head, Stephen Jendraszak, Mary Beth Lehman, Gaylena Merritt, Krista Quesenberry, Ashli Smith, Kyle Winkler, and Katie Zimolzak. Their pictures appear on my website and their tips are reflected throughout it. Without them, my views on tourism would not be what they are, and through them I've learned valuable lessons about teamwork and determination.

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Written Rationale:

For my honors thesis I knew that I wanted to deal with the topic of tourism and study abroad students, and that I wanted to use Derry, Northern Ireland as an example of a city where conscious tourism could be practiced. I was concerned that this information about tourism get out to students who were planning on studying abroad because I feel it's a very important issue that is seldom, if ever, broached with students. Any visitor to a different country needs to be aware of how their presence affects the place they're visiting, and be aware of what images of the country are being shown to them. Being an English major, I was excited about the possibility of writing an academic paper about this topic under the tutelage of Dr. Onkey. However, once I started thinking about what I wanted to accomplish, I realized that an academic paper would not be the right way to approach this topic.

I wanted to make sure that students found this issue approachable and easy-to-follow. Most students I know would not pick up a 25-page paper for the fun of it. I also was curious to see if I could succeed in making a website, because while I have never had to make one for a class I thought it was a valuable skill to possess. I decided that

something on the internet would be my best bet, because it would let me convey the information, which can be heady at times, in easy doses by splitting the articles up on different pages with pictures, different colored text, and links to various sites.

Incorporating pictures into the site was something I was really passionate about, because it allowed me not only to make the topic more interesting but also allowed me to make use of the over 450 pictures I collected on our field study in Ireland. These pictures lead to my favorite page, which is the Tourism Photo Essay page. This page is neat because it displays quotes about tourism under pictures that relate to the quotes, and it encourages the reader to make the connection between the two on their own while promoting a "conscious tourist" mindset.

After deciding that I would be designing a website, I brainstormed with Dr. Onkey about the different topics and questions I wanted to cover and answer. It soon became clear that my website was going to have two different topics: critical theories on tourism and then information on Derry. The vision for the website started out as being a sort of critical travel guide to Ireland and Northern Ireland for study abroad students. Any travel book you open up will contain articles in the beginning about traveling to the country, its history, etc. I wanted my site to be like that only for study abroad students, so articles about getting the most out of your study abroad experience and the history of study abroad seemed only natural to me. The other two articles in this section deal with the issue of conscious tourism and the study abroad student, one article promoting consciously thinking about tourism and the second article comparing and contrasting tourists and study abroad students. The idea for the photo essay dealing with conscious tourism was inspired by another photo essay about the landscapes of J.M. Synge, a famous Irish author.

The ideas expressed in the conscious tourism and study abroad pages are ideas that have been tossed around for countless hours by the thirteen individuals in my Virginia Ball Center class. Although I am sure they quickly tired of it, I continuously brought in the contrasts and similarities of study abroad students and tourists during our discussions, and they helped me form and change my ideas about the issue. Many of the ideas about immersion into the host culture and what it means to study abroad are personal ideas of my own, taken from my own experience abroad in England in the Spring of 2004. These ideas, however, have been debated and discussed with Kelly Wright and Jim Coffin at the Center for International Programs many times.

After deciding I would write four articles dealing with tourism and the study abroad student, I turned my attention to Derry. The decision to focus on Derry was not a difficult one to make: it was always the city that had my attention. At the beginning of the semester I was not enthusiastic about going to Northern Ireland. To be honest, I was a little concerned for my safety and also had heard that the North was lacking in the scenic beauty of the Republic. However, I then learned about Derry and Bloody Sunday, the civil rights march in January of 1972 where 14 civilians were killed. After Bloody Sunday we learned about Northern Ireland's political murals, and how they once were painted to gain support and inspire hope in the communities, but are now major tourist attractions. Learning about these two issues really heightened my level of interest in Northern Ireland, and especially Derry. It is the ideal city, if there ever was one, in which to practice conscious tourism because tourism is so new to the city (it was once avoided because of The Troubles) and also because so many of its tourist sites deal with the sensitive topic of The Troubles.

My goal was to present information about the city in the same manner that a travel

guide for students on a budget would, while also dropping hints that encouraged the reader to look deeper into what they were seeing. *Let's Go! Ireland* was an enormous inspiration to me in writing for the budget traveler. When I was abroad I had relied on their recommendations and had always been thankful for the clear, concise, and accurate information they gave. I strived to present my information in a clear and informative manner like they did. After studying a few other travel books (*Rough Guide* and *Fodor's*, to name a few) it became clear to me what information is needed about a destination. Students on a budget need to know where they can sleep cheaply, where they can get a good meal, where they can clean their clothes, how they can get around a city or country, and where they can email home. They also need to know places to go and understand what they're seeing when they get there.

In my quest to answer these questions, the Derry pages naturally came about themselves. There are pages devoted to cheap accommodation and practical information, which includes internet access, food, laundry, and transportation around the city. There are also two pages devoted to places to see and things to do while in Derry. In addition, I included a page about Derry's history. I originally wanted to have one page that summarized Irish history and one page that summarized Northern Irish history. However, these are both extremely complicated issues that, in some cases, are still in the making. Also, they are extremely hard to keep short without skipping over major events and sounding cliché. At Dr. Onkey's suggestion I removed the two history pages and instead inserted a concise history of Derry that also manages to explain, without getting into confusing and overwhelming detail, the recent troubled history of Northern Ireland. This history is vital knowledge for anyone visiting the town, as most of Derry's tourism deals

with The Troubles. Most of the places in Derry that are recommended to see, stay, or eat at are places that I or my classmates visited while we were in the city. I picked up every pamphlet I came across in Derry and also interviewed a woman from the tourist centre who gave me her recommendations on where visitors to Derry should visit. This information led to my decision on what sites to recommend to students visiting Derry. In addition, there is a page recommending three different tours of Derry that students can take, all three of which either I or my classmates tried out.

After all these articles and pages had been decided upon, it was time for me to start designing the site. Designing a website was not quite as easy as I suspected it would be: it took a long time to get the hang of making tables and inserting pictures and text into them. My vision was for the pages to be clean-cut and simple, with lots of pictures. In order to break up the text and also to make it more interesting and approachable to the reader, I choose to put a picture at the end of nearly every paragraph throughout the entire site. I choose to break the website up into two main menu pages, one on the tourism of study abroad and the other on Derry, for simplicity's sake. I choose to make the text green because it played off of many peoples' perceptions of Ireland and also because it is a pretty, eye-catching color. Adding fonts and colors was the last step of the project, and it has really helped improve the overall look of the site. I am pleased with the simple appearance and easy navigation that my website presents, and I feel that it accomplishes its goal of making the tough topic of tourism and study abroad approachable to students.

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The Tourism of Study Abroad



Students touring Ireland's Ring of Kerry



Derry, Northern Ireland

History of Study
Abroad

The Student vs.
The Tourist

DERRY

Being a Conscious
Tourist

Tourism Ph
Essay

Derry



"the Petrol Bomber"



Derry's Bogside

[Places to See](#)

[Tours to Take](#)

[History](#)

[Places to Stay](#)

[Practical Inf](#)

Derry: Places to See

The City Walls --- As it is the only completely walled city in Ireland, Derry's historic walls, built between 1614 and 1619, are one of its most popular tourist attractions. The walls are 18 feet high and 20 feet thick, and are the main reason Derry was never taken in battle. There are seven cannons perched around the 1.5-mile walls; these were donated in part by Queen Elizabeth I. By walking around the walls (which used to be off-access to tourists, as they were once a hotbed of terrorist activity), you can see many of Derry's other attractions. The walls are open from dawn to dusk and there is no admission fee.



The Bogside --- During the time of the famine, many Catholics from Derry gave up on the thought of emigration to America and settled instead in what was once an old peat bog outside of the city walls. This area came to be called the Bogside, and was the scene for some of the worst confrontations of the Troubles. Today, along with housing the Bogside Murals, it is also home to a Bloody Sunday monument, a monument honoring Catholic hunger strikers, and Free Derry Corner, a wall that celebrates the Catholic resistance to the British military in the late 1960s. A Civil Rights museum is also in the making here, though at this time it is not open to the public.



The Bogside Murals --- These 11 murals, which are quickly becoming the most popular attraction in Derry, were painted by three men who grew up in the Bogside during the Troubles. Their murals depict scenes such as civil rights marches, Free Derry Corner, and of course Bloody Sunday. Many of the murals can be clearly seen from the walls.



The Bogside Artists' Studio --- Visit the studio and meet Kevin Hasson, Tom Kelly, and William Kelly, the men who are responsible for painting the 11 Bogside Murals. The three men will talk about their work, show you their DVD, and answer any questions you might have. You can also arrange for a personal tour of their murals, which lasts about 1.5 hours. The studio is open 9-5 and the admission cost is £5.00. www.bogsideartists.com



Waterside and Foyle Side --- These areas are the primarily Protestant areas of Derry. There are some interesting murals to be seen here, most notably the famous "No Surrender" mural of the Waterside, which can be seen from the walls. Many of the curbs are painted the colors of the Union Jack, and the murals typically depict Ulster-Scot Americans such as George Washington or Franklin Roosevelt. There are also murals dedicated to the Siege of Derry and Loyalist paramilitary groups, such as the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) and the UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters).



The Tower Museum --- This museum, which is Derry's claim to fame, presents all of Derry's history, from its humble beginnings as an oak grove up until present day. The museum strives to give an even presentation of the Troubles, and has recently opened an exhibit about the Spanish Armada in Ireland. The museum is open Monday-Saturday 10-5:00, and admission is £1.60 with a student ID.



The Harbour Museum --- The Harbour Museum displays artifacts that deal with the sea and river history of this port town. The museum is open

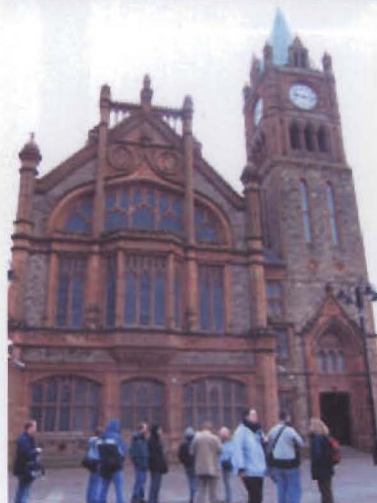
10-1 and 2-4:30 Monday through Friday, and there is no admission fee.



The Workhouse Museum --- This museum, which actually *was* once a workhouse, tells the story of poverty and the Famine in Northern Ireland and compares it with the current situation in Somalia, Africa. Admission is free, and the museum is open Mon-Thurs and Sat 10-4:30.



The Guildhall --- This neo-Gothic building is beautiful to see. It was built in 1887 and was all but destroyed by bombs in 1972. The upstairs is home to a 3000 pipe organ, and sometimes there are concerts held here. The building is also the site of the on-going Bloody Sunday Inquiries. Open Monday-Friday, 9-5.



Bloody Sunday Centre --- The Centre started as a place for family members of the victims to come and rest during breaks in the trial. It has now turned into a museum of sorts, honoring the memory of the 14 men and boys who died that day in 1972. There are videos, posters, and pictures depicting the events of the day, and the place is run by John Kelly, who himself lost his younger brother in the march. The centre is free, although they accept donations, and is open from 9:30-4:30 Monday through Friday.

www.bloodysundaytrust.org



St. Columb's Cathedral --- This

cathedral, named after the founding saint of Derry, is the oldest building in the city, dating back to 1633. Its steeple can be seen from almost anywhere in the city. St. Columb's was the very first Protestant church built in all of Ireland and the United Kingdom---all other Protestant churches had been converted Catholic ones. The cathedral is open Monday through Saturday all year, from 9-1 and 2-4 in the winter and 9-5 in the summer. Admission is £2.00.

www.stcolumbscathedral.org

